

MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION FREE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON SENATE BILL 327

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN MIKE TAYLOR**, on April 11, 2001 at 9:00 A.M., in Room 422 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Mike Taylor, Chairman (R)
Rep. Paul Sliter, Chairman (R)
Sen. Steve Doherty (D)
Rep. Monica Lindeen (D)
Sen. Corey Stapleton (R)

Members Excused: Rep. John Brueggeman (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Gordon Higgins, Legislative Branch
Kyanne Kelly, Committee Secretary

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:
SB 327

Al Randall, Lincoln County Public Library read a letter from the County Commissioners in Libby. **EXHIBIT (frs82sb0327a01)**

CHAIRMAN MIKE TAYLOR asked if Kootnet paid taxes.

Al Randall said no. He said it was a public service that allows many people to have small businesses in the area.

REPRESENTATIVE MONICA LINDEEN moved her proposed amendments SB032703. The Motion failed.

SENATOR STEVE DOHERTY said in the House they wanted to grandfather in the publicly owned internets that were already in business when this bill would take effect.

REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SLITER said he doesn't think public sector entities should compete with private sector in providing services.

SENATOR DOHERTY said he wanted this bill to make the public statement that publicly owned internets should not compete with private internet services.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR said history has shown that when private companies won't jump into the void then public entities have to provide services for the citizens. He said he didn't want to force Kootnet to sell their business, but he does want them to move toward letting private enterprise take over the business.

REPRESENTATIVE MONICA LINDEEN said she didn't agree with the chairman.

SENATOR DOHERTY said he didn't see this as an expansion. And that is the intent of the legislature.

REPRESENTATIVE SLITER said he thought instinct is to flourish, not to dwindle. Kootnet will not want to just dwindle out.

CHAIRMAN TAYLOR said he thinks that Kootnet has understood the intent of the legislature, but to force them to sell would be putting them into a fire sale situation.

SENATOR DOHERTY said if a private entity is going to provide service where Kootnet is providing service, then Kootnet would have to notify their subscribers that they have an alternative.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 327

Motion/Vote: 8. 0 moved that SB 327 BE ADOPTED AS AMENDED by the House committee. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 10:00 A.M.

SEN. MIKE TAYLOR, Chairman

KYANNE KELLY, Secretary

MT/PS/KK

EXHIBIT (frs82sb0327aad)